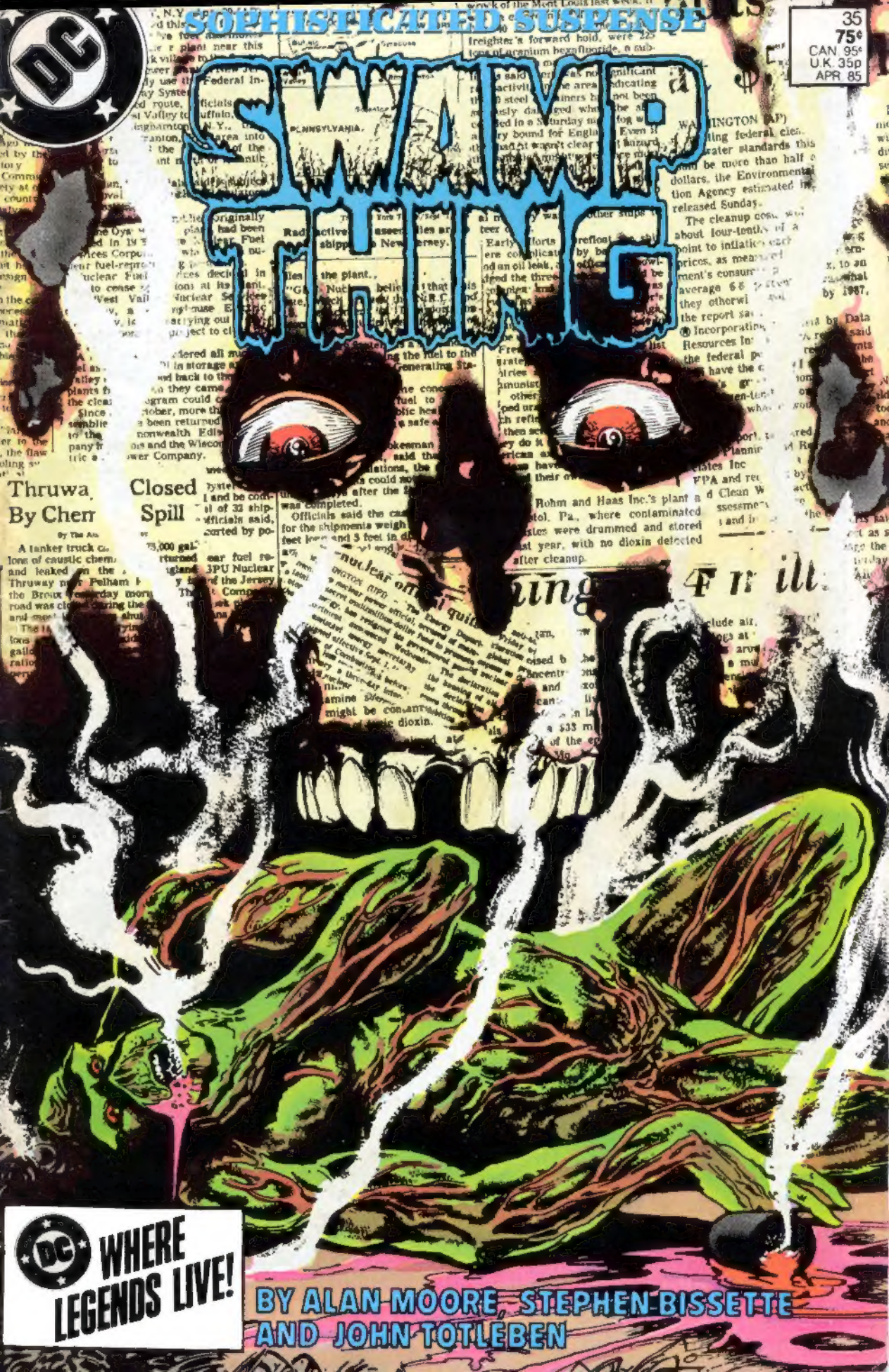
SOPHISTICATED SUSPENSE
35
75¢
CAN. 95¢
U.K. 35p
APR 85
SWAMP THING
WHERE LEGENDS LIVE!
BY ALAN MOORE, STEPHEN BISSETTE AND JOHN TOTLEBEN

PROLOGUE:

While his lover sleeps, the swamp creature sits in the smoldering pink dusk and overlooks his territories.

To the east, paperboys have wearied halfway through their rounds, dumping their remaining papers somewhere discreet and telling the newsagent he must have miscounted. The dead headlines dance upon a lukewarm wind, monochrome tumbleweed bowling through the failing light.

He watches the sheets of newsprint flap like huge moths, crippled by their own weight, hopping clumsily amongst the black trees. Their pages are full of obsolete tragedies and discarded faces; all the carefully logged hysteria of a world he no longer belongs to.

Behind him, his lover mumbles three dream-submerged syllables, but does not wake, and he is content beneath a darkening and volcanic sky. The swamp engulfs them. It is their own damp cosmos, and the troubles of the world beyond seem no more than the whispered conversations of distant neighbors...

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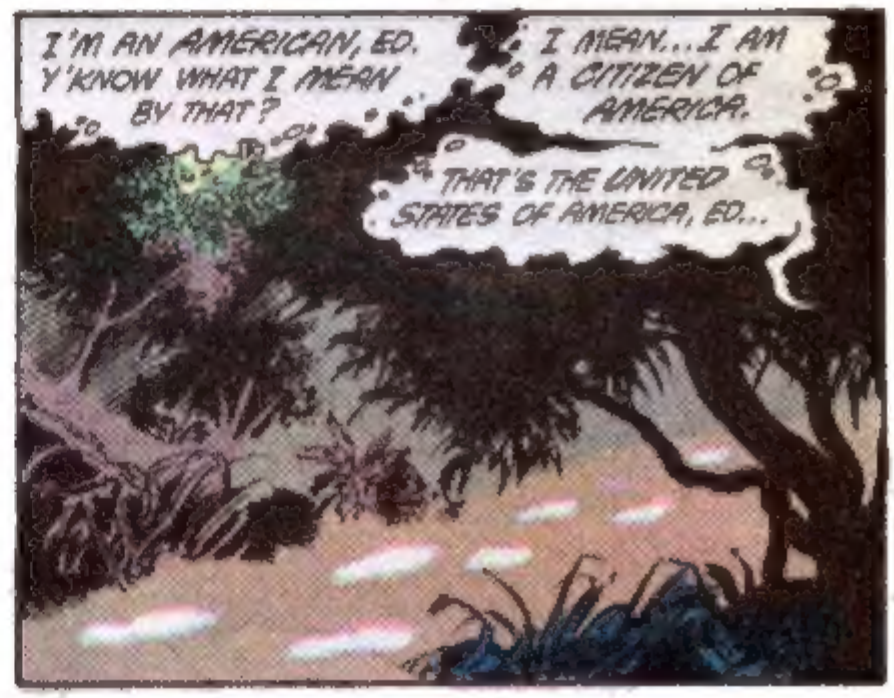
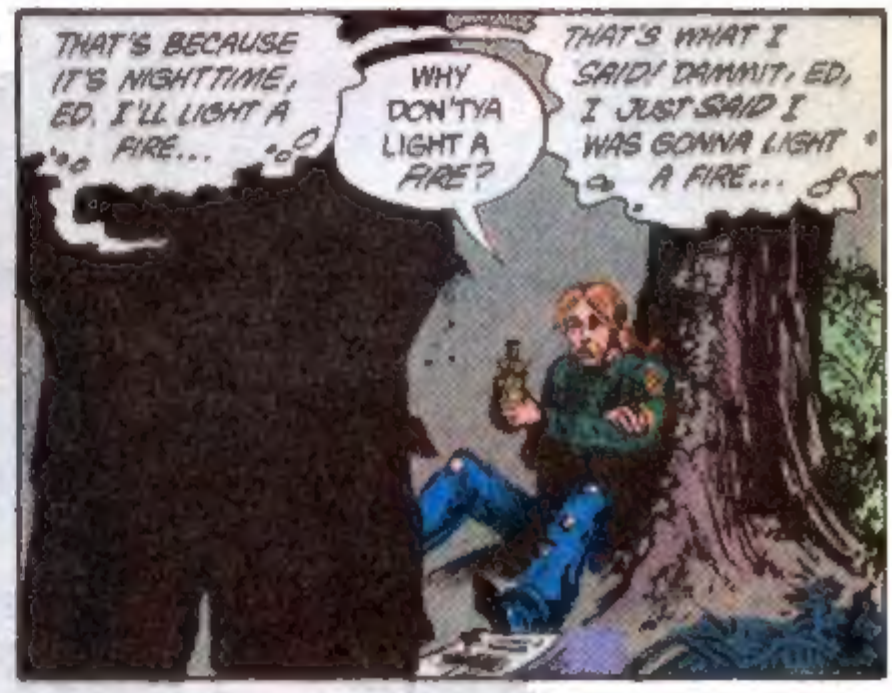
ED?

ED? I WANNA SULP: TELLYA SOMETHIN'...


I'M AN AMERICAN, ED. Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN BY THAT?
I MEAN... I AM A CITIZEN OF AMERICA.
THAT'S THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ED...

MY NAME AIN'T ED.
Y'KNOW... I'M COLD.


THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S NIGHTTIME, ED. I'LL LIGHT A FIRE...
WHY DON'TYA LIGHT A FIRE?
THAT'S WHAT I SAID! DAMMIT, ED, I JUST SAID I WAS GONNA LIGHT A FIRE...

SOME PAPER...
GOTTA MATCH HERE SOMEPLACE...
UP!
HOUMA DA
Nuclear Accident
Radioactive Pedestals Going Back to M

THERE...
SKKRIIT!

SWAMP THING
CREATED BY LEN WEIN and BERNI WRIGHTSON
DC
5 1
The NUKE-FACE papers part 1"
By Toxic Fumes, Are Dead on L.I.
Vere Cleaning Cesspool
3d Worker Injured
ment worriet
Washed-up waste
T.V.A. Lays Off
Over Nuclear Pl
THERE'S GLORY FOR YA...
• Alan Moore: WRITER •
• Stephen Bissette and John Totleben: ARTISTS •
• Karen Berger: EDITOR •
• Tatjana Wood: colorist •
• John Costanza: letterer •
3

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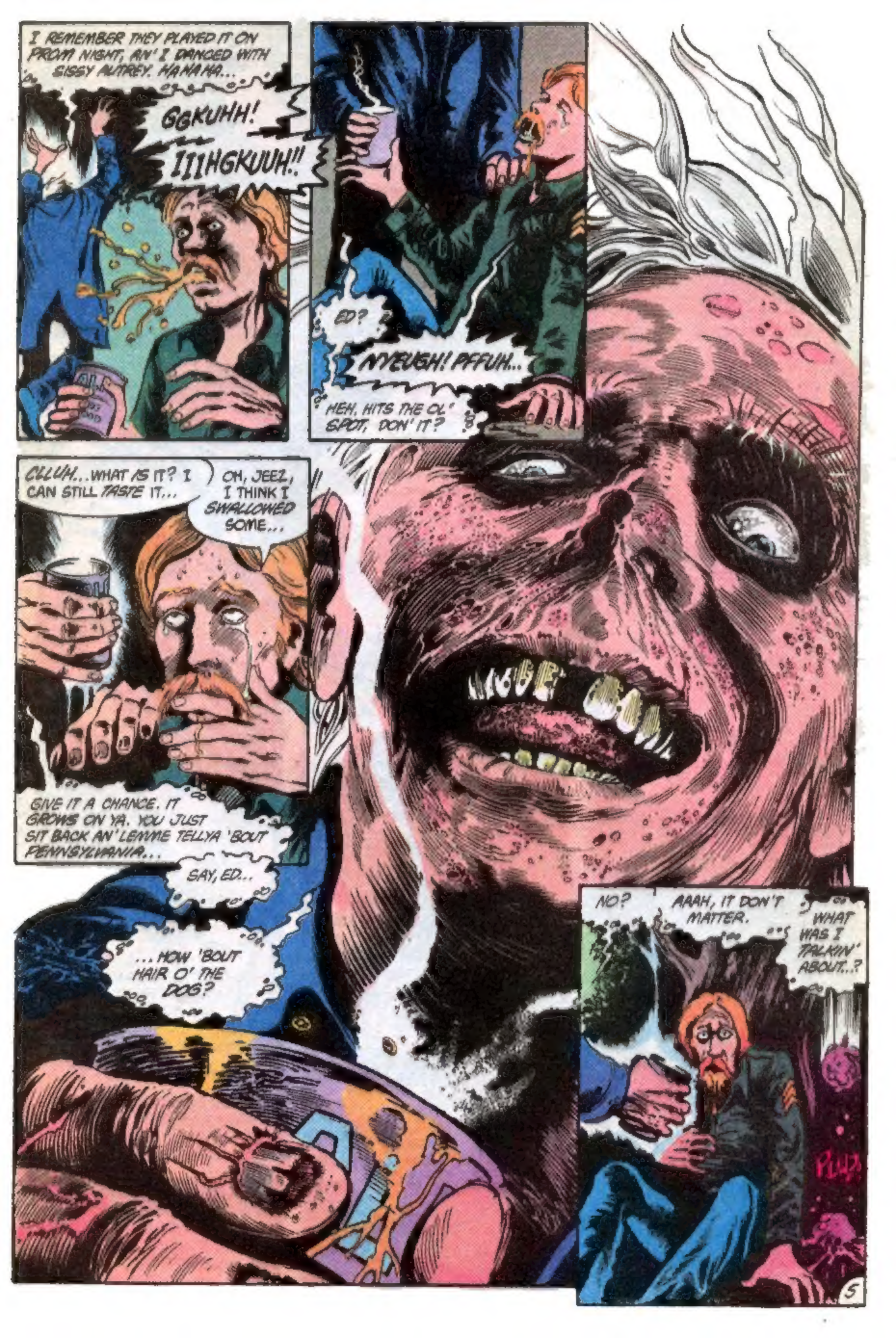

I REMEMBER THEY PLAYED IT ON PROM NIGHT, AN' I DANCED WITH SISSY AUTREY. HA HA HA...
GGKUHH!
IIIHGKUUH!!
ED?
NYEUGH! PFFUH...
HEH, HITS THE OL' SPOT, DON' IT?
CLLUH...WHAT IS IT? I CAN STILL TASTE IT...
OH, JEEZ, I THINK I SWALLOWED SOME...
GIVE IT A CHANCE. IT GROWS ON YA. YOU JUST SIT BACK AN' LEMME TELLYA 'BOUT PENNSYLVANIA...
SAY, ED...
...HOW 'BOUT HAIR O' THE DOG?
NO?
AAAH, IT DON'T MATTER.
WHAT WAS I TALKIN' ABOUT...?
PLUP
5

"OH, YEAH...
"PENNSYLVANIA...
"BLOSSOMVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA. YA HADDA SEE IT BACK IMNA SIXTIES, WHEN THERE WAS WORK.
"THEY HADDA BIG EXPLOSION UP AT THE LOMBARD MINE IN '68...
"WHOLE DAMN COAL SEAM CAUGHT FIRE!
"IT'S BIN BURNIN' LIKE THAT FOR SIXTEEN YEAR, NOW...
"NOBODY WORTH SPEAKIN' OF LIVES THERE THESE DAYS.
"JUST MACHINES, Y'KNOW? DEAD OL' MACHINES...
"I WAS THERE TILL A MONTH OR SO BACK, BUT, Y'KNOW, IT ALL WENT T' HELL AN' I HADDA LEAVE...
"TELLYA FER NUTHIN', ED, I WISH I WAS BACK THERE.

"I WONDER WHAT THE PEOPLE 'RE DOIN' IN BLOSSOMVILLE TONIGHT?"

WALLACE?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO WAIT IN THE CAR, TREASURE.
IT'S COLD...

OH, I GOT BORED.
ARE YOU STILL THINKING ABOUT ALL THAT AWFUL TROUBLE?
IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT.

NO, I REALIZE THAT. IT'S JUST...
OH, I DON'T KNOW. I'M JUST GLAD THAT THE DUMP HERE HAS FINALLY BEEN CLOSED DOWN AND SEALED OFF.
I'M JUST GLAD TO SEE THE BACK OF HIS HELLHOLE.

WALLACE, YOU KNOW, I WISH YOU WOULDN'T USE THAT WORD.
NO. I KNOW. I'M SORRY.
I WAS JUST THINKING...

THIS MUST ALL HAVE SEEMED LIKE SUCH A GOOD IDEA WHEN THEY STARTED OUT.

THE STARRINESS WERE ALL USED UP AND EMPTY, AND NOBODY BUT THE BUMS AND WINOS EVER CAME NEAR. IT WAS AN IDEAL PLACE TO DUMP THE, Y'KNOW, THE...

THE STUFF.

THE STUFF. YEAH.

THE COMPANY WAS STICKING IT IN THE SLAG PITS UNDER THE OLD LOMBARD MINE. IT WAS SAFE DOWN THERE! THEY DID TESTS!

WALLACE, I KNOW YOU! YOU WOULDN'T BE INVOLVED IF IT WAS SOMETHING THAT COULD HURT PEOPLE.

NO. NO, OF COURSE I WOULDN'T.

BUT THEN THOSE TRAMPS, THOSE BUMS... THEY ALL STARTED VANISHING...

WALLACE, YOU KNOW HOW DERELICTS ARE. THOSE POOR MEN, THEY GET LOST, THEY LEAVE THE AREA...

IT'S GOD'S WILL. YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF.

SAY, DID I TELL YOU ABOUT THAT THING I HEARD THOSE KIDS SAY? ABOUT ONE OF THOSE OLD MEN THAT VANISHED?

THEY SAID HE WAS "OUT ON A BENDER WITH NUKEFACE."

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN, DO YOU THINK?

I DON'T KNOW.

C'MON... IT'S GETTING COLDER. LET'S GET BACK IN THE CAR.

THE COMPANY WANTS US IN LOUISIANA BY NOON TOMORROW...

Nuclear Panel Votes For Proposal to Start 3 Mile Island Plant

"O' COURSE, EVERYBODY LEFT BLOSSOMVILLE IN THE END..."

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

EVEN ME, ED.
I STAYED ON AS LONG AS I COULD AFTER THE '68 BURN-UP...
OWED IT TO OLD JEFF LOMBARD. HE HIRED ME WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN. THE PNEUMONIA TOOK HIM IN '64...
WE ARE NO COWS

I USED TO LIVE OUT IN THE MINE, JUST, Y'KNOW, LOOKIN' AFTER STUFF, KEEPIN' STUFF TIDY...
NUH...

ROUND '72 OR SO, A LOTTA COMPANY PEOPLE CAME ROUND, STARTED PUTTIN' STUFF DOWN IN THE OVERFLOW PITS...
UAH...
AA...

HELL, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS...
BUT, Y'KNOW, WHEN A GUY'S THIRSTY, HE...
ED?
TWEEK

ED? YOU ALL RIGHT?
GETTIN' CHILLY AGAIN, HUH?
MY TOOTH...
MY TOOTH JUST CAME OUT.

WELL, I'LL TELLYA, I FIND THAT I DON'T NEED 'EM... Y'KNOW, WHAT WITH NOT EATIN' SO MUCH...
HERE, LEMME STRAIGHTEN OUT THIS FIRE FOR YA, ED...
BOB.

SURE. SAY, YA GOTTA *MATCH*, ED?

COAT POCKET. I...

Y'KNOW, I...

EVERYTHING'S BLUE.

Y'KNOW...

EVERYTHING.

IT'S BLUE.

WRAP UP SOME RE-ED RO-SES FOR A BLU-U-UE LADEEE...

HEH HEH HEH.

Y'KNOW, I'DA NEVER LEFT BLOSSOMVILLE IF IT HADNA BIN FOR THE *TROUBLE*...

AFTER THE TROUBLE, THEY SENT AN *INVESTIGATOR*. NICE GUY. CALLED ED SOMETHIN'...

AFTER HIM THEY SENT *ANOTHER* INVESTIGATOR, AN' THEN THEY POURED A LOTTA *CEMENT* DOWN ON *MY* STASH IN THE PIT...

HEARD 'EM SAY THEY WERE *MOVIN'* THE DUMP DOWN HERE, TO *LOUISIANA*.

I FIGURED, Y'KNOW, I MIGHT AS WELL TAG ALONG...

Y'LIKE THIS *FIRE* I MADE, ED?

YEAH, I GUESS YOU DO.

S'A FUNNY THING... EVEN THOUGH I LEFT *BLOSSOMVILLE*, IT'S LIKE I TOOK PART OF IT *WITH* ME, Y'KNOW?

IT'S LIKE BLOSSOMVILLE'S *STILL HERE*...

"IN MY MIND, IN MY DREAMS
"BLOSSOMVILLE IS STILL THERE IN MY DREAMS"
I WALK... THROUGH A BAD PLACE...
A BAD PLACE THAT I DO NOT KNOW..
I AM DREAMING.
BUT... WHOSE DREAM AM I DREAMING?
AND WHERE... ARE ALL THE PEOPLE?
SOMETHING... HAPPENED..HERE.
SOMETHING BRIGHT AND AWFUL KISSED THE WORLD..
.. AND LEFT.. ITS SMEARED. BLUE. LIPSTICK-PRINT

THE SOIL IS CURDLED... AND ALL THAT GROWS... GROWS WRONG
IN A SKIN OF BLACK CINDER, PUDDLES REFLECT FIRE... RED AND WET AND GLISTENING-LIKE SORES...
THE SONG OF STILLBORN BIRDS ECHOES... THROUGH THE DEFORMED METAL TREES...
...THERE IS A RATTLE...
...IN THE THROAT...
...OF THE WIND.
AM I AM ALONE
12

ALONE IN DEATHTOWN.
PLEASE...
LET IT NOT HAVE HAPPENED YET...

LET THERE STILL BE GRASS.

IT WAS A DREAM.

THE KATYDIDS... CONTINUE... THEIR MONOTONOUS ACCUSALS... AND ABBY... IS SAFE... BESIDE ME.

IT WAS A DREAM... I CAN... FORGET IT... AND RETURN... TO SLEEP...

NO.

NO I CAN'T.

Viewpoint

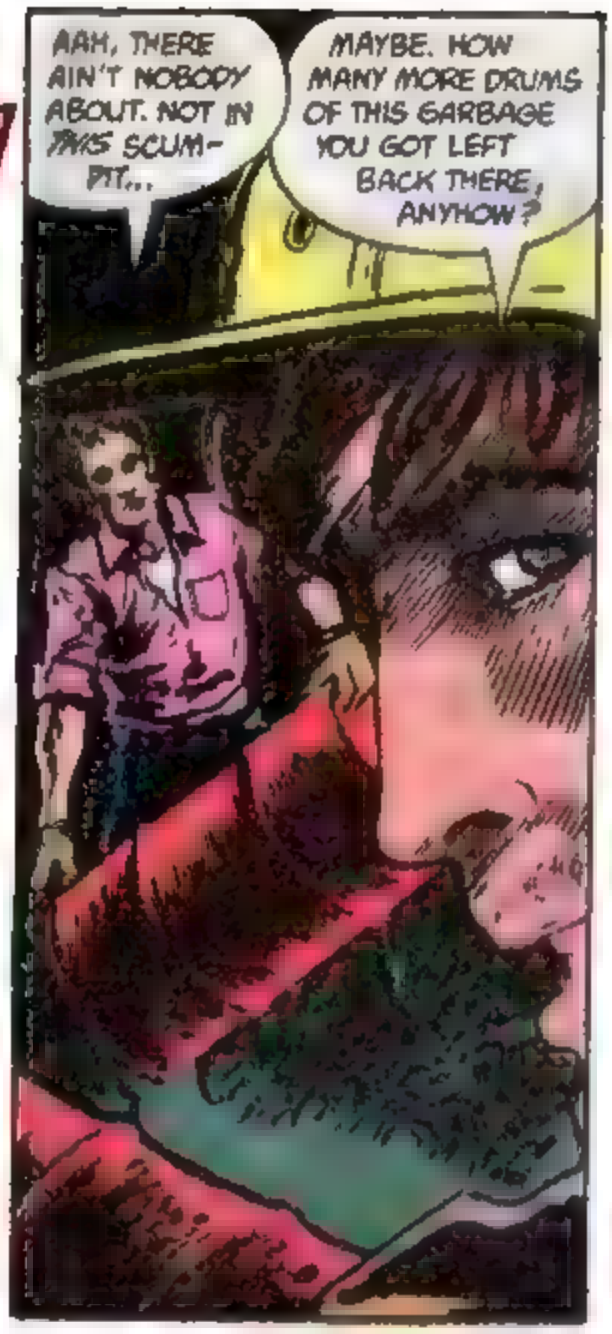
Easing toxic waste worries

OUR OPINION

Americans can feel confident a
the difficult issue of toxic wastes.
There are major benefits, and
just environmental, in bringing t
problem under control.
As Jones said during his Erie visi
a toxic waste dump site located any
where in the area, could be a major
source of new jobs.
Jones predicted that a good-sized
industrial park could spring up near
the first waste site that is agreed
upon in Pennsylvania.
Again the essential is for people to
feel the government is on top of the
problem that problems are known in
advance and are controlled. And th
that connection the new federal
lations are a

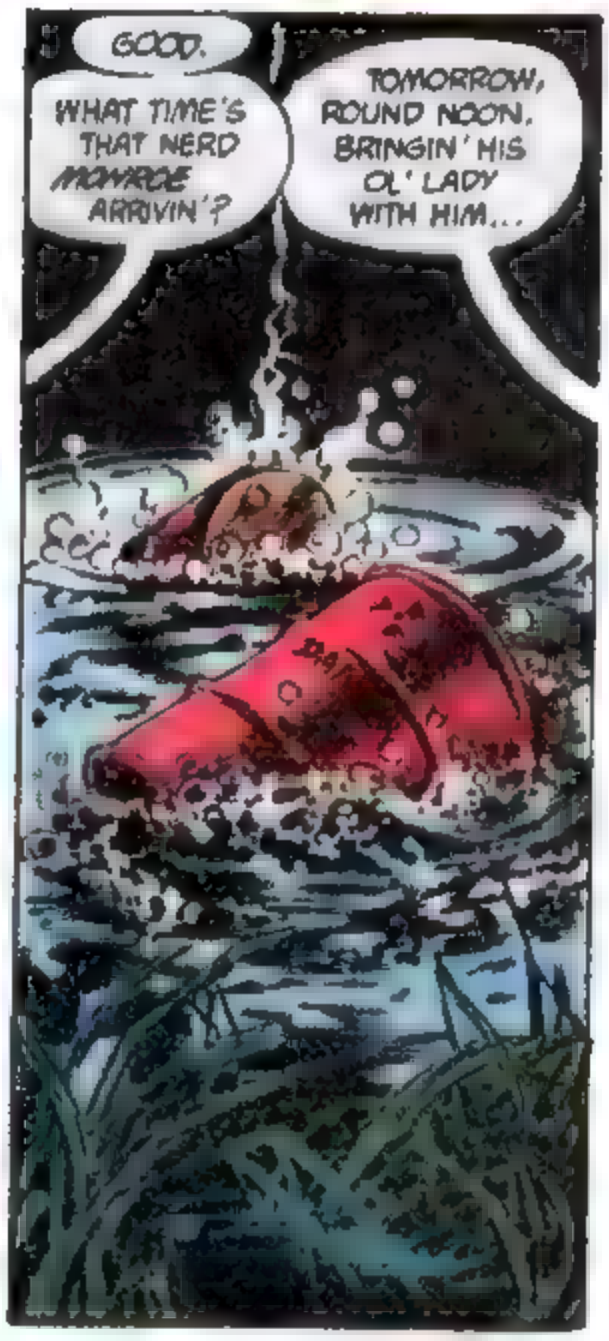
:UP:
Y'KNOW, I WAS DRINKIN' THIS STUFF FOR A COUPLA MONTHS 'FORE I FOUND OUT WHAT IT WAS.
"WASTE." THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL IT WASTE FROM NUCULER FISHING SUPPOSED T'BE BAD FOR YA.
THESE DAYS, EVERYTHIN'S SUPPOSED T'BE BAD FOR YA..
WHO CAN KEEP UP WITH ALL THAT HEALTH STUFF, ANYWAY? ALL THAT HIPPY ANTI-NUCULER STUFF...
I ASKYA, ED... WHADDA THEY EXPECT ME TO DO ABOUT IT?
RIGHT! THAT'S IT EXACTLY! THAT'S THE WORD! COMMITTED!
WE'RE COMMITTED TO NUCULER ENERGY. CAN'T PRETEND IT NEVER HAPPENED...
"NATURAL POWER"? FORGET IT! HOW YA GONNA RUN A CAR ON WINDMILLS AN' WATERWHEELS?
ANSWER ME THAT!
SEE? YOU CAN'T! WE NEED NUCULER FISHING!
.. AN' THERE'S DEFENSE! A LOTTA THE JUNK COMES OUTTA THESE PLANTS MAKES MISSILES AN' STUFF...
CLOSE 'EM DOWN, WE'LL ALL END UP ON THE COLLECTIVE FARM SLUGGIN' BACK VODKA!
WE'RE COMMITTED, ED! COMMITTED AS AMERICAN CITIZENS!
I'M COMMITTED... YOU'RE COMMITTED. EVERYBODY'S COMMITTED!
SO WHY DON'T THEY ALL JUST SHUT UP ABOUT IT?
:UP:

BAKRANG!
SSSHHH! KEEP THE NOISE DOWN FOR GODSAKES.
BLUB GURGLE


AAH, THERE AIN'T NOBODY ABOUT. NOT IN THIS SCUM-PIT...
MAYBE. HOW MANY MORE DRUMS OF THIS GARBAGE YOU GOT LEFT BACK THERE, ANYHOW?

OH, THIS IS THE LAST ONE...
FUB BLUP

...FOR THE MOMENT.
PLUSSH!

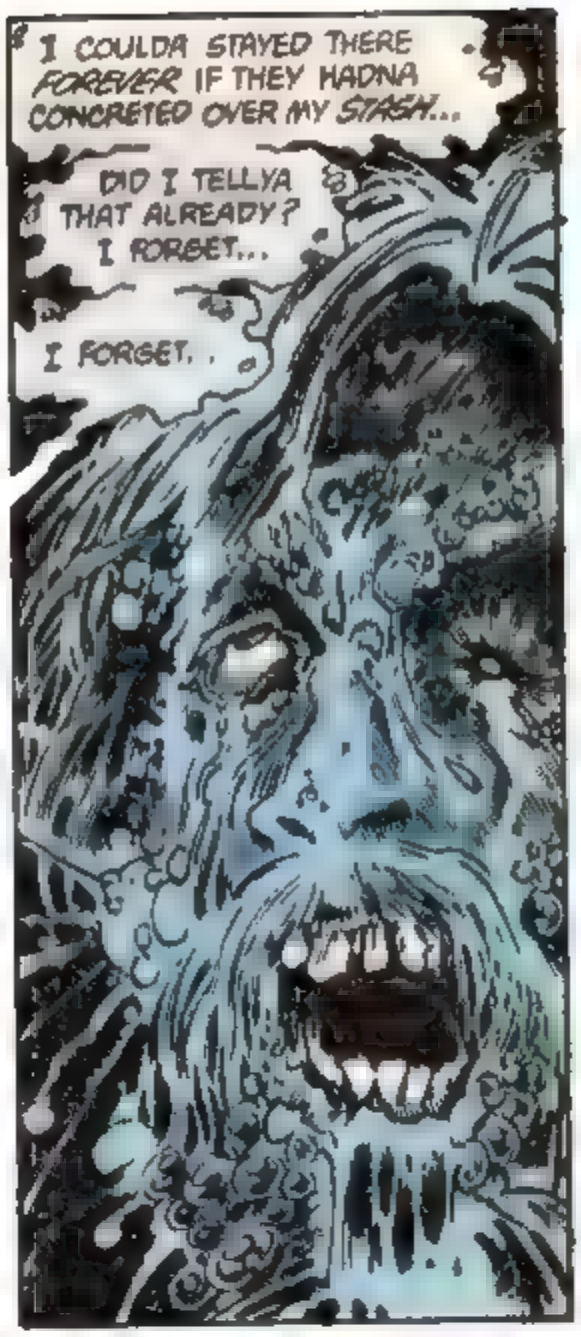

GOOD.
WHAT TIME'S THAT NERD MONROE ARRIVIN'?
TOMORROW, ROUND NOON. BRINGIN' HIS OL' LADY WITH HIM...

THE LITTLE FAT BROAD, ALWAYS TALKIN' 'BOUT JESUS? DIDN'T SHE HAVE A FUNNY NAME? WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
"TREASURE."
"TREASURE"! THAT'S RIGHT, NANANANANA...

CONTINUED ON 3rd PAGE FOLLOWING

DEAD...

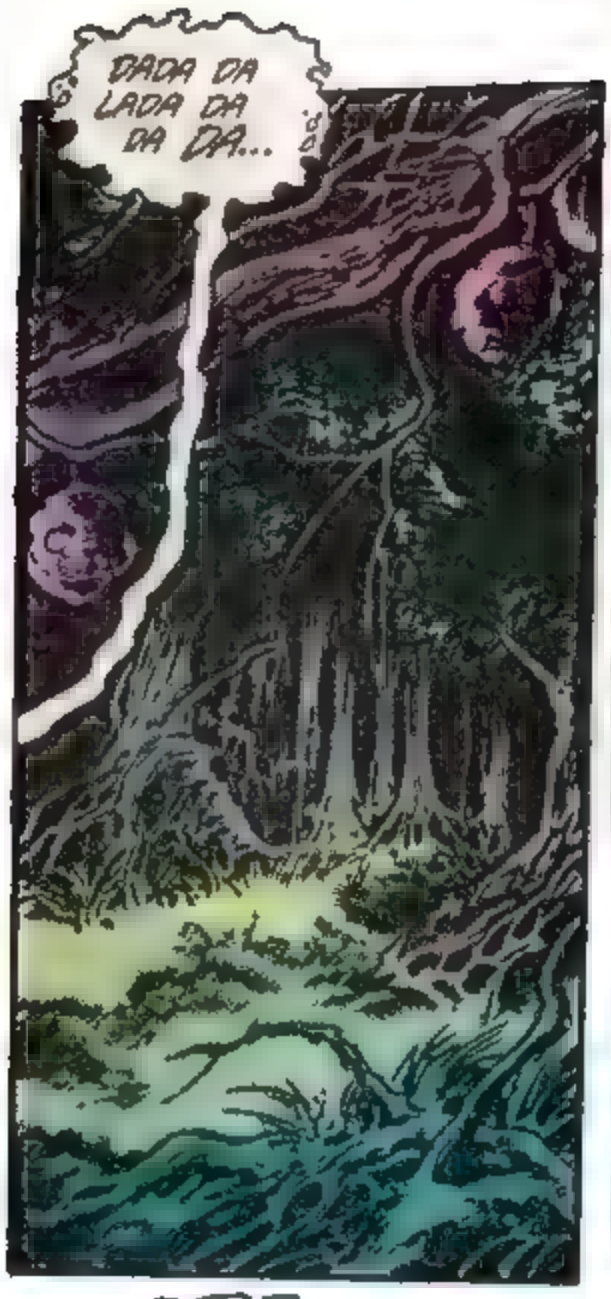
THAT'S WHAT IT IS ABOUT SWAMPS... TOO DAMP. NOTHIN' BURNS FOR LONG...
IT WAS DIFFERENT IN BLOSSOMVILLE...


I COULDA STAYED THERE FOREVER IF THEY HADNA CONCRETED OVER MY STASH...
DID I TELLYA THAT ALREADY? I FORGET...
I FORGET...

ALL THEY LEFT ME WAS A COUPLA FLASKS THAT I SIPHONED OFF THIS BIG OL' DRUM THAT SPLIT OPEN.
AIN'T MUCH LEFT NOW... THAT'S WHY I CAME HERE...
WHEN A MAN NEEDS A TASTE...

ANYWAY, ED, S'BIN GOOD TALKIN' TO YA.
I GOTTA GO NOW. THERE'S MORE O' THIS STUFF 'ROUND HERE SOMEPLACE. I'M GONNA GO SNIFF IT OUT...
YOU TAKE CARE O' Y'SELF, NOW..

Uranium Shipme
By RICHARD BERNSTEIN
PARIS, Aug. 28 — A French cargo ship that sank off the coast of Belgium Saturday night was carrying contain- ers filled with a form of uranium used to make fuel for nuclear reactors, the ship's owner and French Government officials said tonight.
Guy Lengagne, the Secretary of State for Maritime Affairs, said in a


DADA DA LADA DA DA DA...

DADA DA LADA DA DA DA.

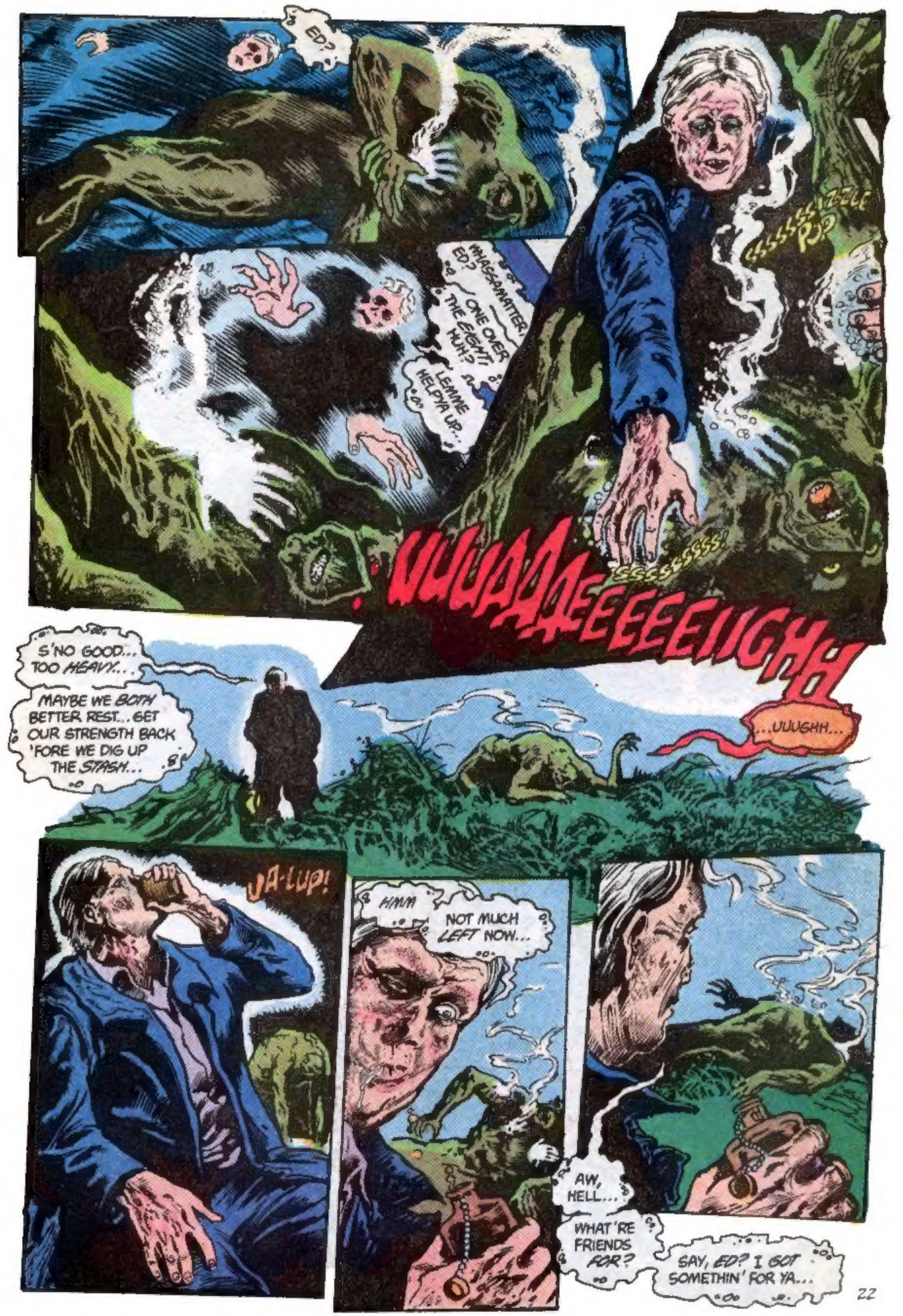
DADA DA LADA DA DA DA...
PLUP
PLUP!

PENNSYLVANIA SIX-FIVE-OH-OH-OH!
HEH HEH...
NO DUMPING

HERE?

THEY DUMPED IT HERE...
THEY BURIED IT UNDER THE MUD!!
AWW, NO
THEY GOT NO RIGHT! NO RIGHT TO BURY IT
I'M ENTITLED! I'M AN AMERICAN CITIZEN...
AW, NO WHADDAYA GONNA DO?
DIG IT UP GOTTA DIG IT UP.
I'M ENTITLED I...
WHUH?
ED? THAT YOU?
YA GOTTA HELP ME, BUDDY...
THEY BURIED IT.
THEY BURIED IT UNNA THE MUD!

WHAT... ARE... YOU?
ME?
I'M AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.
LISTEN, ED, WE GOTTA STICK TOGETHER. YA GOTTA HELP ME DIG IT UP...
YOU'RE LIKE ME, ED...
YOU'RE COMMITTED.
AAAUUUAAAAAAAA
HHHNUH..
SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS
21


ED?
WHASSAMATTER, ED?
ONE OVER THE EIGHT, HUH?
LEMME HELPYA UP...
SSSSSSSIZZLE POP
UUUAAAEEEEEIIGHH
SSSSSSSSSS!
S'NO GOOD... TOO HEAVY...
MAYBE WE BOTH BETTER REST... GET OUR STRENGTH BACK 'FORE WE DIG UP THE STASH...
...UUUGHH...
JA-LUP!
HMM
NOT MUCH LEFT NOW...
AW, HELL...
WHAT'RE FRIENDS FOR?
SAY, ED? I GOT SOMETHIN' FOR YA...

"OVER THE TEETH AN' ROUNNA GUMS, LOOK OUT STUMMICK...
"...HERE IT COMES!"
THERE...
GA GURGLE!
THERE'S GLORY FOR YA, HUM?
NOW, YOU JUST SIT BACK A WHILE, ED...
...AN' LEMME TELLYA 'BOUT PENNSYLVANIA...
...TO BE CONCLUDED...

SWAMP THINGS

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Dear Alan,

OH,MY GOD!!!!!!!!!

That was my first reaction (repeated several times over) to SWAMP THING #29. I knew that Arcane was back, right from the night of Matt Cable's accident, but I never, *never* thought it could be like this!

You, Alan, being the consummate author that you are, have created a story (nay, a whole book!) of absolute, intense horror. Your creation of Abby's living nightmare in "Love and Death" allowed the reader to share in her terror, her despair, and her total disgust of the grotesque occurrences around and within her. I must say that although I read this in broad daylight, it still scared the heck out of me. In fact, it may take a long time for me to recover from the shock of it. (In other words, "Love and Death" was a great success!)

Of course, its success does not end there. Stephen, John, and Tatjana interpreted your story with a perfection unprecedented in most any other comic. Every shadow, every expression, and simply every little detail worked toward the overwhelming horrific feeling of the book. And, yes, I especially liked the occasionally "revealing" mirrors; it was a terrific effect.

By the way, don't think that is all that I will do (give praise),certainly not. If I find something that disagrees with me (or I with it), believe me, I'll let you know!

But then again, so far—so good!

P.F. Nolan
25 Grapevine Row
Milford, CT 06460

"Love and Death" was definitely nothing like Woody Allen's comedy of the same name, P.F., and judging from much of the mail, particularly the next few letters, most initial reaction was just like yours. (Not that anyone would find that difficult to believe!)

* * * * *

Dear Sirs,

Just read SWAMP THING #29. Brrrr...

John Mabbs, II
P.O. Box 722
Alamogordo, NM 88310

Dear Karen,

I have never, ever read a comic which utterly chilled me to the bone. Never, that is, until SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING #29. This title has gone from a mediocre comic, all but scoffed at on the newsstands, to an excellent graphic art form among the very best being published today. Never could there be better scripting or art for this book than there is now.

If this is the place, I'll be staying.

Robert Cline
PO Box 146
Wheatland, IN 47597

Alan, Stephen, John, Karen, and Fred:

SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING #29...Jeeeezzzzuuuuussssss Chriiiiist!!!! (Sorry, CCA.) Are you people trying to scare me or something?!?? I'll forever have nightmares about Sally Parks! The fifth panel on page 16 sent me dashing to the bathroom! No comic has ever done that to me before ... and my sister was taking a shower!

However, I'm kind of a masochist ... so please, do this to me again (sounds pretty sick, eh?).

Oh, is this book approved by the Comics Code Authority? I mean, I personally find it offensive and ... Tally Ho!!!!

The Confused
Paladin

* * * * *

Dear Alan,

Did you know SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING #29 wasn't approved by the Comics Code? I opened up the issue and saw why! Page 19, panel 3. Shame on you. I thought comics not approved by the Code couldn't be sold on newsstands. What gives? Also, why don't change the title from SWAMP THING, to ABBY! (Swampy only appeared in ten or so panels.) This is Swampy's book. Abby is shown too much. I buy this book for Swampy, not to see Abby run around her house for seventeen pages ripping off her clothes. It's Swampy's mag, let him star, please.

A confused fan.

Sorry for the confusion, guys, so let's try to rectify the problem. It was right after SWAMP THING #29 was disapproved by the Comics Code Authority that DC decided to no longer submit the book to them. The decision was made not because we want to get incredibly gory or have half-naked people running around Louisiana. Alan tends to write stories dealing with more adult themes than is common in most Code-authorized books, with "horror" (not gore) being very prevalent. No one is creatively handling the book any different than before; we just now don't have to worry about possible Code disagreements. "Sophisticated Suspense" was added to inform consumers that the book's content is in fact meant for an "older reader."

Now, as for your complaint about overdosing on Abby. She's the central person in Swamp Thing's life, so it makes perfectly good story sense for her to be very much involved in the book, and yes, even that means having more "coverage" than Swamp Thing in a given issue. We're not taking any time away from our "star"; his presence is always felt, and that's a key to effective storytelling. And while we're on the subject of Swamp Thing's role, the next letter makes some good points.

* * * * *

Swamp Folks,

First, the emotional hyperbole in regards to issue 29: AAAARRRRGH! How can you leave me hanging like this! This story has to be one of the most disgusting, revolting (i.e. great) I have read. Rarely does a comic get any emotional response from me, but my heart was honestly pounding through each page. Whew!

Now for the more rational analysis: Not one to rest on past successes, Alan Moore has continued to scare the sox right off us with studies into the horrors that the plant and insect kingdoms hold for those of us in the animal kingdom. Perhaps this is a horror more pure than ghosts and monsters, for how many among us have met these classic beasts of the horror genre? And yet each of us comes into daily contact with plants, and insects, taking for granted their presence, not contemplating the possibilities for horror within them. Not until Mr. Moore has revealed those horrors, that is.

A grand theme is beginning to unravel here. Something larger than any one story, or series of stories. This book is not "this month Swamp Thing battles the Muck Monster—be back next month when he battles Crouton Man." Sometimes, such as this issue, Swampy is merely the tangent point for the characters in the story. At this time he is not directly involved in the story line at all. This is quite similar to the Demon

stories in numbers 25 and 26. Swamp Thing was the point at which the horror revolved around, instead of being the point at which it concentrated on. It shows strength in a book when the main character can make only a cameo appearance and the story loses nothing.

Alan Moore has become a master at beginning the story near the climax, "framing" the events in a recollection of some sort, then after enough details have been revealed, finally allowing the curtain to close on the issue. For example, in this issue the climax was obviously pages 21-22, and yet page one takes place only about five minutes before pages 21-22. The details of how Abby got to this point in the story are beautifully framed in her dreams. The result of this is that instead of starting at ground zero and working our way to the climax, we start at the climax and stay there the entire story while tantalizing bits and pieces are allowed through to us. That is why my heart beat the whole time I was reading. This is very similar to the style in the classic "Anatomy Lesson" in number 21. The story began with the death of Sunderland and stayed at that point throughout while Woodrue revealed the preceeding events through his vengeful narrative. All this is evidence of a writer who is in control of the book (not just looking for an idea to fill this month's issue) and who has the direction firmly in grasp at all times. This is good stuff.

The art? I would be back to emotional hyperbole in no time talking about the Bissette/Totleben/Wood art. This, too, is good stuff.

Both versions of SWAMP THING have been the cream of the comics crop, but at present the book is approaching levels of quality attained only ever by a few comics. I know that Mr. Giordano and others are staking a lot in this book. They believe in it, in spite of rumored slow sales. Please continue to believe in it, folks. I do. If a super-hero book is canceled, it is just one more costume put back on the shelf, but SWAMP THING is one of a kind. There is nothing like it. BUY THIS BOOK! Put SWAMP THING bumper stickers on your car! Wear buttons! Get two subscriptions! I've said enough, you get the picture. I'm back to emotional hyperbole, but I do extend hearty thanks to the creative Swamp-team that is making this happen.

Donald G. Shelton
2891 Richmond Rd.
Lexington, KY 40509

Sales on SWAMP THING have indeed been nothing to write home about in the past, Donald, but in the last six months, direct sales orders alone have increased fifty percent—and we're hoping for more of the same!

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Dear Crew,

I hate bugs. The bigger they are, the more I hate them. I especially hate the big ones with prongs on their back ends because they look poisonous, full of unknown and horrible venom that does awful things to human flesh. SOST#29 was full of bugs.

I also have certain mental images from childhood, you know the sort, the ones that are always there at the surface, the ones you suddenly find yourself recalling when you're doing something that takes minimal mental effort, like falling asleep on the train going home from work. Amongst such memories are burning insects with a magnifying glass because I didn't know better; and the fascination and hope I felt when I prodded a bird I thought dead, yet which moved, but the stomach slid open to reveal ... you guessed it, bugs and maggots. SOST#29 contained these two scenes, also.

As you can tell, SOST#29 contained scenes I could really relate to. This made the mounting horror all the more real for me. Because mounting horror is the only way I can describe this issue. Alan Moore is the only writer to have touched a real chord of fear and revulsion and terror in me in my 11 years of comic reading. From the first page, with the bloodied wire brush lying like a bent porcupine, to the last, Alan kept me spellbound, wanting to turn the page but fearing what I'd find.

As for the art: wow. The Bissette/Totleben team has made Alec's body not just alive but teeming, a walking ecosystem. This team produces what must be some of the most unique art in comics. Their perceptions of situations and characters lend so much to each issue, especially their wonderful style of shading: the big black areas on faces dissolving into those fine black lines work stunningly to convey mood and barely hidden danger (as in the last panel of p. 10 and Abby on pp. 2-3).

Finally, Tatjana's colors bring the art to vibrant life (I particularly like the yellow and orange of the dreaming Abby throughout the book), and John's lettering brings the script to crisp and clear life.

No. 29 was an excellent issue, with the fear of what's happened to Matt being allowed to rise slowly to the surface until it explodes on pp.21-22,he yellow that represented the dreaming Abby suddenly bursting into reality with her realization of the truth of her nightmares. And the last page, with the dead bird paralleling poor Matt's condition, really left this reader afraid of what next issue will do to him but still clamoring for more.

Yes, SOST#29 was an issue I could truly relate to. But I'm lucky: my fear of bugs (and that's what hatred boils down to, as you only hate that which you feel threatened by) remains generally suppressed; unfortunately, Abby, whether she hated bugs before or not, has to confront half a dozen dead people full of them, including her husband and uncle possibly rolled into one. I pity her.

Thanks for a singular comic experience, everyone, and see you all next issue.

Mark Dito
13 Cameron Ave., Earlwood. 2206.
Sydney, Australia

Since you seem to love to hate bugs, Mark, you should get a load of Steve and John's really grotesque, weird drawings of Arcane's un-men (bearing a lot of insect-like qualities) that were recently published in the SWAMP THING issue of the **Comics Journal**. *If you haven't seen that issue, run to your local comic book store and pray that they still have some copies left. There are interviews with Alan, Steve, and John, a good number of never-before-seen Bissette and Totleben illustrations of Swamp Thing and other stuff, and an incredible-looking cover which was painted by John.*

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Dear Editor,

As a regular reader of another company's comics, I found myself amazed writing to DC. Then I realized that I wasn't just writing to another company, but to another kind of book. SWAMP THING is a comic in the horror genre, a genre I have never been fond of, until SOST. This is my first letter to SOST and DC, and it will not be my last.

I have never seen such graphic and terrifying illustrations in all my comic reading life. The scripting is equally as scary.

Pages 2 and 3 were a portrait of a personal nightmare that set the mood for this horrifying issue. The creepy-crawly bugs introduced on page five made my skin crawl. I wondered how it made Abby feel.

I loved the way the portrait on page 2 foreshadowed the events to come. Totally gruesome.

On page 18 the insects looked as if they were crawling off the page. The insects with human faces made this page even more horrifying.

Page 21 and 22 made Abby's fears even more real to the reader. "Just say uncle." What an unforgettable line. Uncle Arcane, isn't it? He's sliding off the top of the page into our lap as we read those three words.

Finally we see Swamp Thing's disgust on page 23. The bird made my stomach crawl.

Next issue is not to be missed.

I've heard it said that the first SWAMP THING run could never be topped. I never had the chance to read them, but they must be masterpieces if they are better than this recent Moore/Bissette/Totleben run.

Very sincerely yours,
Jeff Ghearing
#8 Pike
Wellston, OH 45692

Next Month: SWAMP THING **sizzles**—*literally!! Don't miss the end of Swamp Thing as we know him in the conclusion of the Nukeface Papers! See you then—Karen*